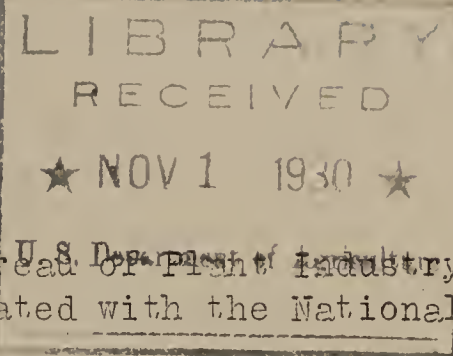


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR.



A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, horticulturist, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through WRC and 37 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, October 7, 1930.

Last Tuesday, I suggested the possibilities of farm families making a little extra money this fall by gathering and selling native nuts, especially black walnuts and butternuts. The process involves the cracking of the nuts and picking the kernels from the shells. Right away I received a challenge to tell how to crack black walnuts so as to get the kernels out in halves without breaking them and at the same time avoid smashing one's fingers. Most of my nut cracking in my boyhood days was done on a flat stone with a small, more or less round stone for a hammer which resulted in a good many blackened and bruised thumbs and fingers. Sometimes I used the blacksmith vise which we had in the farm shop, or a heavy block of wood and a hammer. When the question of the best way to crack walnuts was brought to my attention I sought the advice of Mr. C. A. Reed, our nut specialist, but found that he was off at Mt. Vernon on a nut gathering hike with the Boy Scouts, but later I found him looking over the results of his trip, and here is what he says about the best methods of getting the meats out of the walnuts.

Where quantities of walnuts are to be cracked for the market it will pay to purchase a regular cracker, however, the ordinary cracker such as is used for pecans is not strong enough. Of course, there is a great difference in the cracking quality of walnuts and those from some trees are easier to crack than others. Mr. Reed says that the nuts should always be cracked end-wide where a cracker is used, but where a hammer is employed the nuts should be held firmly and cracked on edge. A heavy block of hardwood such as hickory and with a slight hole or depression in which to place the nut will be satisfactory. A rather broad faced hammer is desirable. Black walnuts should be cracked reasonably soon after hulling and before the shells become extremely hard and the kernels dry and brittle. One nut grower that Mr. Reed visited was using an ordinary shop vise with extra plates over the jaws of the vise and sockets drilled in these plates to hold the nuts. The use of a vise or a cracking machine has the advantage over the hammer method in that the pressure may be applied gradually and checked before the kernels are broken. I thought perhaps Mr. Reed could suggest some magic method by which the kernels would almost fall from their shells, but he says that it is a case of "nuts to crack" and a good job for those long early winter evenings while you are enjoying the radio programs. That appears to be the whole thing in a nutshell.

Reports from the Southern States indicate heavy planting of fall and winter garden crops for home use. No less than ten or twelve different kinds of vegetables can be grown in the Southern States during the fall months and several of them can be kept going all winter. Wouldn't you folks who are snowed in for 2 or 3 months each winter be glad to be able to go out into your gardens in December or January and gather several kinds of fresh vegetables? Your supply of fresh vegetables is, or should be, in your storage cellar from

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now on. It will not be amiss, however, for those of you who live in the North to give the garden a good cleanup and fertilizing this fall so that you can get an early start next spring. Many of you doubtless have turnips, beets, carrots, cabbage and celery still growing and my suggestion is that everything of value be saved and stored for winter. Once more I desire to call attention to our bulletin on the Home Storage of Vegetables, Farmers' Bulletin No. 879-F, which gives the proper temperatures and methods of storing vegetables for winter use.

Fruit growers, especially those living in sections where the drought has been severe, are warned to be on their guard against the loss of young trees by the depredations of rabbits and field mice. Due to a scarcity of natural green foods and Jack Frost whetting the appetites of these animals they are almost certain to gnaw the bark from any unprotected young trees. Covering the trunks of the trees to a height of at least 18 inches with 1/4 inch galvanized woven wire, commonly called "hardware cloth," is the best safeguard against rabbits. The wire netting should be cut in strips wide enough to fold completely around the tree trunk leaving a space of at least 3/4 inch between the wire and the bark of the tree. In placing the wire protectors around the trunks of the trees, first remove a little of the soil from about the base of the tree trunk then after the wire is in place return the soil and pack it about the base of the wire. The wire can be held in place either by twisting a piece of plain wire around it or by tying it with a heavy string. Roofing paper or building paper that does not contain creosote or coal-tar can also be used as protectors but must be removed in the spring as it injures the bark of the trees if left on during the growing period.

Cleaning away all weeds, trash or mulch from about the trees is the first step in mouse control in orchards, but where the rodents are abundant poisoning should be resorted to. Full directions for the preparation and distribution of poison baits is too complicated to be safely followed if given over the radio, but Farmers' Bulletin 1397-F, "Mouse Control in Field and Orchard," contains very full information and we will be glad to send you a copy. The use of traps is fairly effective for eradicating mice in orchards, but is not practical where great numbers of these pests are present.